Volume 23, No. 22, September 02, 2016

Nation

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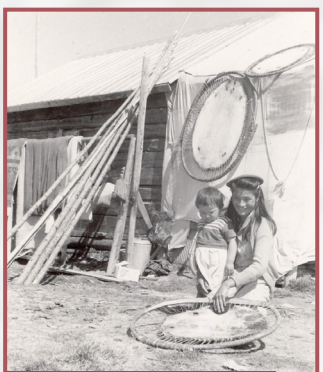

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Throat Singer, Nina Segalowitz
Photo by
Nadya Kwandibens

Editorial

Justice for Aboriginal women in Quebec?

Guest editorial by Edith Clouthier
Executive Director, Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre

Last fall, the shocking allegations by Aboriginal women in Val-d'Or of physical and sexual misconduct perpetrated against them by local Sûreté du Québec officers brought a human drama into the light – violence against Indigenous women committed by those who are sworn to protect and ensure the safety of all citizens of Quebec.

These troubling revelations triggered a political crisis in Quebec, creating a wave of shock amongst the population that monopolized media attention both at the national and international levels. Days following the broadcast of Radio-Canada's *Enquête* episode in October 2015, several Chiefs (under the umbrella of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador), held an emergency meeting at the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre to call upon the Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard to take immediate actions to guarantee the safety and protection of Aboriginal women. Our centre became "ground zero" for Aboriginal response to the crisis.

The Cree Nation increased the pressure by decreeing an economic embargo on Val-d'Or, provoking a bombshell within the city's business community best illustrated by a bewildered and overwhelmed businessman showing up at the Friendship Centre, searching desperately for answers to: "Why should I be paying for someone else's mistakes?"

The spontaneous answer I gave him was: "You don't get it, do you? This is not about you or your business! This is about caring for our women, it's about dignity, respect and justice." It took drastic measures and emergency meetings at high levels for the Val-d'Or establishment and the Quebec government to grasp the suffering and the anger that was manifest within First Nations communities.

That was a year ago. Where are we today? Investigations by Montreal Police were conducted and judicial proceedings should follow. The City of Val-d'Or and the Chamber of Commerce adopted action plans to fight against racism, prejudices and discrimination. On August 3, the Canadian government launched the long-awaited Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls Commission.

How did Quebec respond to this announcement? By refuting the claim of Quebec's First Nations for an independent provincial public inquiry. As always, Quebec is shovelling the "Indian problem" off to the federal government. Quebec Aboriginal Affairs Minister Geoffrey Kelley and Justice Minister Stéphanie Vallée argued this decision was taken for the well-being of the victims of SQ police abuse, to spare them from having to testify twice.

Two problems arise from this position. First, it is not up to government ministers to decide whether or not the women should tell their stories and to whom they can reveal details of the violence perpetrated by SQ police officers. Second, should there be a public inquiry on the relationship between police authority and Indigenous women in Quebec, this would mean that not only the women, but also SQ authorities and Quebec government ministers could be summoned to testify.

Having been notified of the situation in Val-d'Or in May 2015, the Quebec government would then be publicly confronted with its own inaction to end police abuse and its failure to protect Aboriginal women in Val-d'Or. Then, the delicate issue of systemic racism against First Nation citizens in Quebec could be addressed.

The time has come for Quebec to take a hard look at how First Nations and Inuit people are treated. It's time to tackle the roots of racism and discrimination that maintains Aboriginal peoples of this province as second-class citizens. If we citizens aspire for social justice for all and an authentic reconciliation, it is evident that an independent public inquiry in Quebec has become unavoidable.

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Leave it to **the feds**

Quebec confirms **it will not hold provincial inquiry** into Val-d'Or allegations

by Joshua Grant

After a prolonged investigation into allegations of sexual and physical abuse against Indigenous women in northern Quebec by Sûreté du Québec officers, the Quebec government has now confirmed it doesn't consider the scandal – which allegedly included starlight tours and solicitations of sexual favours – worthy of a provincial inquiry.

Instead, the government said it would defer to the federal government's Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, scheduled to begin this September.

Native Affairs Minister Geoffrey Kelley and Justice Minster Stephanie Vallée made the announcement August 17, much to the frustration of the Cree Nation Government, the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador, Quebec Native Women's Association, and other Indigenous organizations.

"We have consistently taken the position that it is absolutely essential that Quebec launch an independent judicial inquiry into the allegations which were brought forward by Cree and Algonquin women last October regarding abuses by SQ officers in the Val-d'Or area," Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come told *the Nation*. "There must be an independent judicial inquiry specifically looking into these allegations, their merits, findings of whether charges need to be laid against specific officers and determinations of further legal recourses."

While Kelley noted that a criminal investigation into certain SQ officers is still underway, Coon Come and AFNQL Grand Chief Ghislain Picard disagree with Quebec's position that the federal inquiry will bring sufficient justice to the victims.

"There's a sense of mistrust between our communities and the SQ," said Picard in an interview with the Aboriginal People's Television Network. "That needs to be restored. And the only way to do it is to have a proper and adequate inquiry into the situation."

In response to Kelley's argument that the women concerned shouldn't be subjected to repeated questioning, Picard responded that the victims and their loved ones should be the ones who decide how to tell their stories, not the provincial government.

"Let's ask the families how they feel about it," Picard said. "I'm sure there are cases where people would say 'Well, let's look at it closely.' Maybe a federal inquiry or a national inquiry will not go to that extent."

The federal MMIW inquiry follows an extensive pre-inquiry process that gathered recommendations from some 2100 participants who are affected or familiar with the phenomenon of missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

The inquiry's commissioners have a mandate to "look at all underlying causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls including systemic issues…make concrete recommendations to end the unacceptably high rates of violence, as well as the authority to examine institutional policies and practices such as policing or child welfare."

To Coon Come, the federal inquiry is not sufficient to address the situation in Val-d'Or or other northern communities that have since seen allegations of police abuse against Aboriginal women.

"What we would like to see come out of a [provincial judicial] inquiry is the truth," Coon Come concluded in an interview with *the Nation*. "If the allegations are found to be supported by sufficient evidence to lay charges, then this is what must be done, and it must be done as swiftly as possible."

Where the federal process will examine how Canada can work to eliminate systemic and institutional racism against Indigenous peoples, Coon Come believes it will be difficult for its commissioners to hold Quebec's provincial police force accountable.

"We need to put every individual representative of the state, and every state institution, on notice that they are not above the law, that they cannot use their authority to intimidate and abuse those they may see as vulnerable, and that Indigenous lives matter," Coon Come said.

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The slow drip of **broken promises**

by Dan Isaac

It's easy to overlook the difference between words and action, especially when the words are something you've been waiting to hear for decades.

But there's a cold realization seeping in that our shiny new prime minister may have been fudging it when he promised before last fall's election that the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) would be "adopted" by his government. Despite his social media savvy, since taking power Justin Trudeau has preferred to let his smile and bare torso do the talking while keeping silent about the issues that matter.

At the recent AGA of the Assembly of First Nations in Niagara Falls, federal Minister of Justice Judy Wilson-Reybold (a former BC Regional Chief of the AFN) appeared to be heavily managing expectations when she asked, "Collectively, are we ready to implement UNDRIP?"

This version of Parliament boasts a record 10 Indigenous MPs, eight of whom are Liberals. One has already voted against a study devoted to the idea of a guaranteed minimum wage, minutes after delivering a 48-minute speech promoting the concept. Barely 10 months after they were elected, institutional inertia already appears to be catching up with the federal Liberals, their Indigenous MPs and their promises.

"Both the Liberal and Conservative parties have been governing this country for the past 150 years. If people were expecting real change, that's like asking the Titanic to turn on a dime. The political machine is so deeply rooted against Indigenous peoples in this country. It's very difficult to change," observes New Democratic Party MP Romeo Saganash.

Saganash, who hails from Waswanipi, has taken the lead in the fight to have UNDRIP recognized as law on Parliament Hill. "It's time to stop talking about it and do something about it," Saganash told *the Nation*.

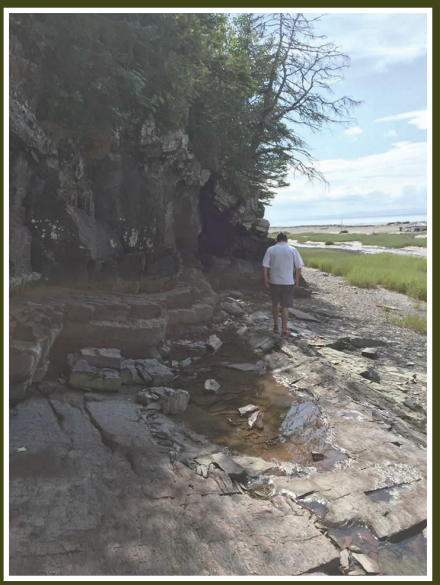
In April, he tabled the Private Member's Bill C-262, which aims to make all laws of Canada compliant with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. "So far the indication from the Liberals isn't very clear. We're trying to hold the Trudeau government to their promises," said Saganash.

Since tabling the bill, Saganash has begun a national tour to rally Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups in support of the bill. More recently, he's started an online petition in support of the implementing UNDRIP.

Saganash notes that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission called on the Canadian government to fully adopt and implement UNDRIP as the framework for reconciliation. He feels it's crucial that people support the petition to force the federal Liberals to keep their word.

"Accountability and integrity is an indispensable mile-marker on the road to reconciliation," Saganash insisted. "If reconciliation is to mean anything, we all need to be in it together."

The petition can be signed at www.adoptandimplement.com



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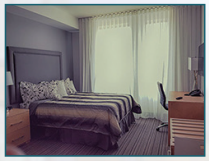

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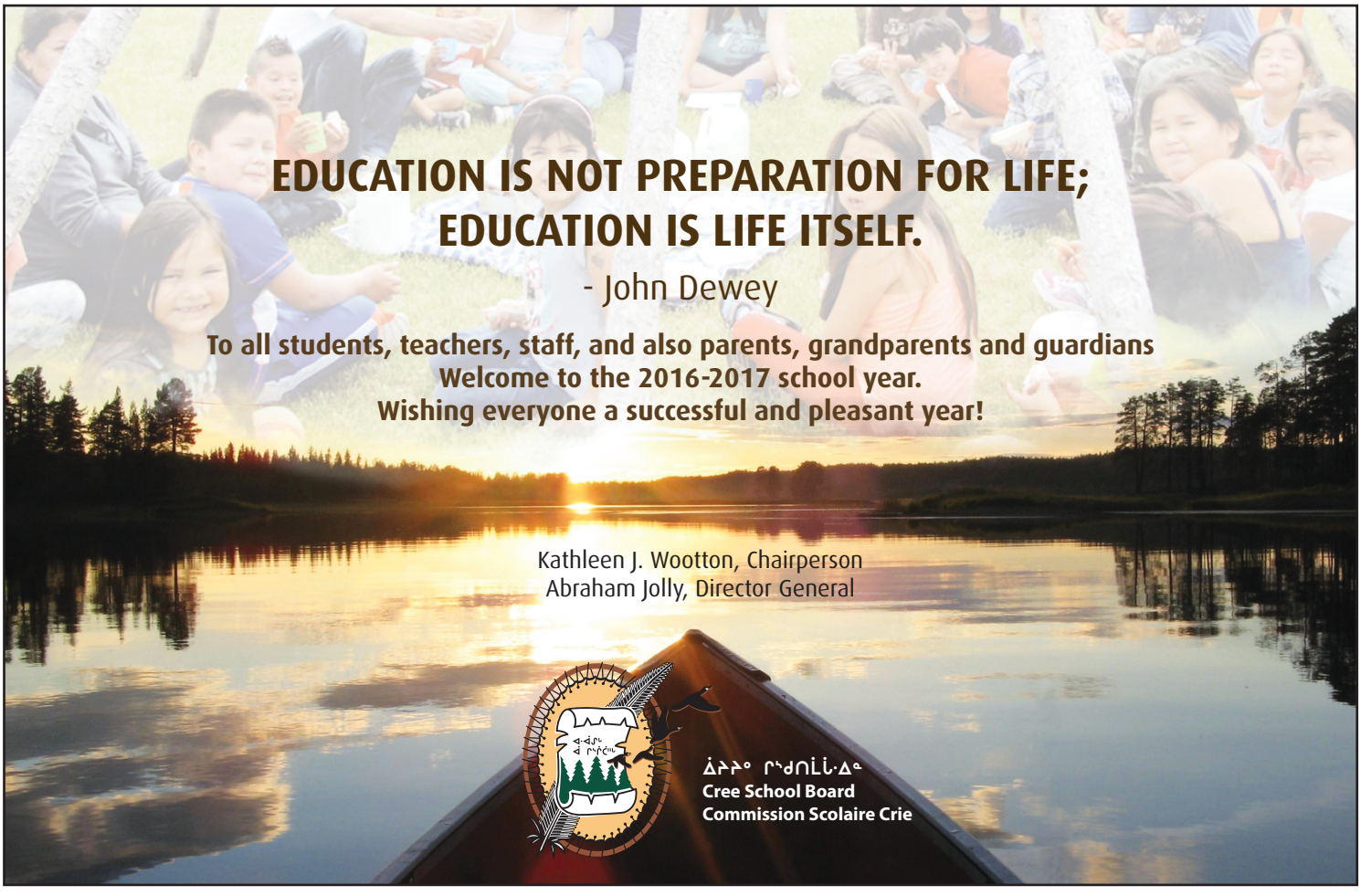

EDUCATION IS NOT PREPARATION FOR LIFE; EDUCATION IS LIFE ITSELF.

- John Dewey

To all students, teachers, staff, and also parents, grandparents and guardians
Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year.
Wishing everyone a successful and pleasant year!

Kathleen J. Wootton, Chairperson
Abraham Jolly, Director General

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Cree School Board
Commission Scolaire Crie

In Brief

First Cree teacher at Algonquin College

Phoebe Blacksmith Hester recently landed a teaching position at Algonquin College in Ottawa as part of the all-new Indigenous Cooks pre-apprenticeship program. Her connections to the college, Indigenous knowledge and background in cooking resulted in an unexpected phone call from program director Wes Wilkinson, who told her the job was hers if she wanted it.

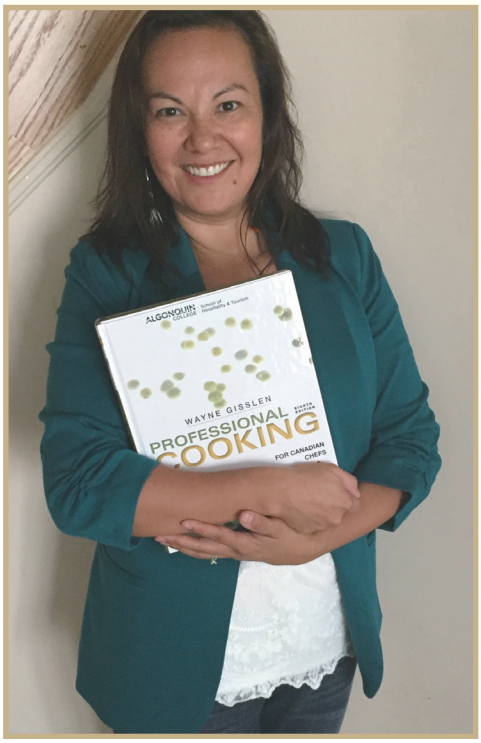
Originally from Mistissini, Blacksmith Hester graduated from Algonquin College with a certificate in Hotel and Restaurant Management in 1999 before going on to study Culinary Arts at the New England Culinary Institute in Vermont.

"I taught a bit in Waswanipi before as part of a trial program with Cégep Saint-Félicien. But this is totally different, teaching in a college," Blacksmith Hester told *the Nation*.

"I teach theory of food, with an Indigenous twist to it. I don't do the cooking per se, I teach more of the history, the vocabulary and the areas where chefs and cooks can work in the industry. I try to incorporate a little bit of food history and traditional methods of cooking."

Blacksmith Hester ran a restaurant called the Sweet Grass Aboriginal Bistro in downtown Ottawa for seven years before closing due to financial reasons. Now she's working part-time at Algonquin and taking care of her children. Although many people ask her if she'll ever open another restaurant, she says she is focused on teaching part-time for the time being.

"I'll get my feet wet and maybe later on I'll take on a few more classes," Blacksmith Hester said. "It's a new program so they're still tweaking it. When they do that I'll be on a panel to help update the program."



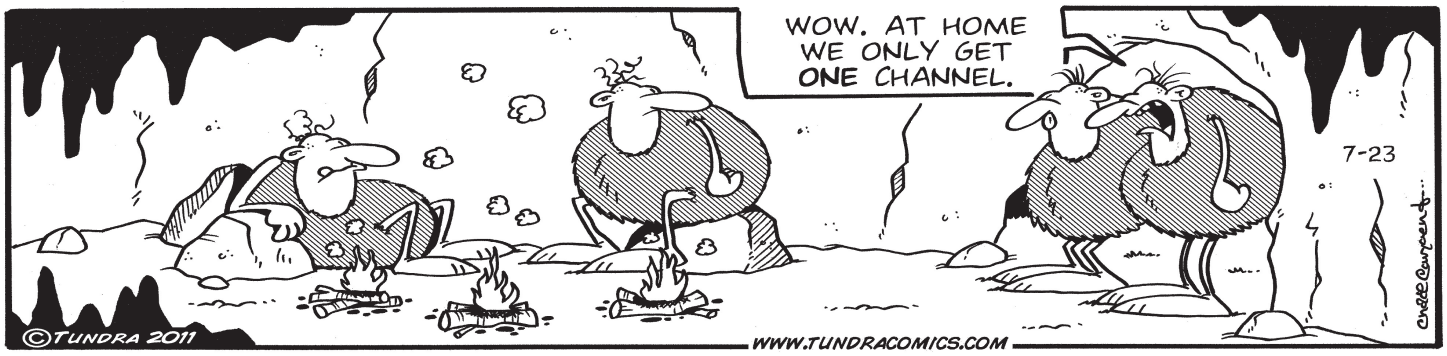
Mistissini Community **Awards**

Mistissini presented their Community Recognition Awards as part of Crime Prevention Week on August 17. Here are this year's winners:

Arts & Culture: Sylvia Blackned and Brendan Forward
Bravery: Whitney Blacksmith, Adrian Coonishish, Darren Loon and the late Walter Gunner
Business: Meechum Reg'd
Community Spirit: Josie Matoush
Courage: Eric Benac
Environment: Justus Coon-Come
Innovation: Elizabeth Ashamock
Role Model: Ashley Iserhoff
Sport: Charlie Iserhoff Jr.
Father: Richard Mianscum
Mother: Kathleen Rabbitskin

Mistissini's Fire and Public Safety Department, the Eeyou Eenou Police Force and local Paramedics were also awarded plaques for their dedication and hard work in keeping the community safe.

Left: Phoebe Blacksmith Hester, Right: Betty Anne and Georgina Forward holding Brendan Forward's Arts & Culture award



Back to school for students of all ages

Taking advantage of academic and vocational opportunities

by Joshua Grant & Dan Isaac
Photos by Stanley Saganash

Returning to school or pursuing continuing education can seem like a daunting task. The Cree School Board and the staff of Sabtuan Adult Education Services (SAES) offer a wide range of courses for adults looking to develop or improve a variety of skill-sets that can translate into a meaningful career. Sabtuan hosts vocational programs within all the communities of Eeyou Istchee and they are looking to expand into other First Nations communities, such as Amos and Matagami, in the coming year.

SAES provides more than just the education and the training necessary to be prepared and successful in the workplace. They also work with potential students to assess their personal needs and career goals, help them find a program that's right for them and assist them with meeting the necessary admission requirements. Guidance counselor Luc Bertrand is just a phone call or an e-mail away and available for personal consultations upon request. Call 1-844-923-3346 ext. 1323 or e-mail lbertrand@cscree.qc.ca.

"Every time I meet someone I ask them, 'Do you have an idea of what

Photo by: Catherine Orr

you want to do, or is it a blur?'" Bertrand explains. "For example, if someone wants to become a pilot, I tell them it's not easy. You have to complete a process: do you like math, or sciences? A pilot has to study lots of math and science."

Bertrand says he won't tell students what to do, but will help them examine options that gibe with their interests and skills. Then he will explain the steps that must be taken to achieve those goals.

If you're still unsure of the next step to take in your career plan or search for employment be sure to visit Wemindji for the annual Cree Human Resources Development Regional Career Fair October 18-19. For now, here's a list of vocational courses the SAES hopes to run in the next year.

Start dates and program offerings are subject to change depending on interest level and the number of students enrolled, so stay up-to-date on the Sabtuan website at www.csbsaes.ca/en/vocational-programs. For information regarding eligibility and academic prerequisites visit www.inforoutefpt.org

Hotel Reception:

Hotel Reception training teaches students how to maintain guest registry books, respond to client inquiries about hotel services and utilize digital and manual systems to take care of administration duties in a hotel setting. If you're bi- or tri-lingual and a good multi-tasker with customer service and computer skills, a Hotel Reception certificate could help you land a comfortable job at a front desk anywhere in Quebec.

Commercial and Residential Painting:

This program trains painters to apply finishes that protect and decorate surfaces in residential, commercial, institutional and industrial buildings as well as construction sites. Training involves preparing wood, masonry, plaster, cement, metal and chalky and synthetic surfaces prior to applying paint, high-performance coverings, waterproof materials, flame-retardant materials, varnish, lacquer, wall coverings and special finishes.

Upon completing their training, painters have a number of employment options available to them – working for a construction company, maintaining residential buildings, working in an industrial setting or striking out on their own as entrepreneurs or independent contractors.

Accounting:

Thinkers, mathematicians and those who enjoy managing money and budgeting are ideal character traits for successful accountants. Graduates of Sabtuan's accounting course master manual and digital accounting tasks, learn how to manage and maintain financial data and demonstrate bilingual communication skills. Accounting programs are planned for Chisasibi and Waskaganish in Spring 2017.

Home Care Assistance:

This is an ideal course for individuals who find fulfillment in helping others, exhibit kindness, patience and understanding and possess solid listening and communication skills. Students are trained to provide basic care and services to people of all ages who are dealing with sickness or physical and mental disabilities. This involves helping clients carry out their everyday activities, organizing their living environment, ensuring clients' safety and intervening in crisis or emergency situations. Students also learn to help clients integrate and socialize in individual or community activities.

All of these tasks require establishing a relationship of trust with clients and those close to them. They also advise clients on their lifestyle habits and provide parenting support where applicable. The goals of a home-care

G. C. C. E. I. C. N. G.

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Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)
Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee)

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Cree Nation Government
Gouvernement de la Nation Crie

We wish all students, parents/guardians and teachers the very best for the new school year. Today's commitment to education is a valuable contribution to capacity building for the Cree Nation of tomorrow.

We commend you for your efforts!

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Professional Cooking:

Do you love to cook? Can you work well under pressure? The Professional Cooking program gives students the knowledge, ability and attitude necessary to prepare and implement a work plan and incorporate the necessary elements to provide smooth service, apply hygiene and practice food safety. Courses also teach how to practice occupational health and safety standards, cook various foods properly, present food in accordance with industry standards, prepare, season and store hors-d'oeuvres, soups, meat, fish, vegetables, sauces, desserts and other products in accordance with specific procedures and create menus for various meals including table-d'hôte menus, à-la-carte items and buffets.

Northern Building Maintenance:

Directed at northern industrial life, this course helps students develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for managing a small warehouse. Learn the ins and outs of storing and maintaining tools, electrical equipment, plumbing and heating systems and develop the ability to work on internal and external building components. If you enjoy problem solving and working with your hands, this certificate could be your first step to landing a job in your home community or elsewhere in Eeyou Istchee.

Northern Heavy Equipment Operations:

Here's your opportunity to jump on industrial vehicles, move tonnes of earth and materials and get involved in the heavy lifting side of construction. This program teaches the basic principles of construction infrastructure and provides the knowledge and practical application of safety regulations in the industry. Students learn how to maintain heavy machinery and master the operation of different types of machines through a hands-on approach and comprehensive class experience. If you enjoy problem solving and working with your hands, this certificate could be your first step to landing a job in your home community or elsewhere in Eeyou Istchee.

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by Will Nicholls

HOW TO TURN IN A GREAT PAPER

Of the things I've learned over the years, among the most important was how to turn in an assignment that would get me a great mark. As with everything it requires a little work but not as much as you would think. In fact, once you do the initial research it gets much easier.

In a nutshell, here is what I learned. Check out what your professor has written. Look at a few of their papers. In academia, the saying is "publish or perish."

When reading a professor's work look for a few things.

1

Look for the professor's ideas on the subject or a subject similar to what the assignment is.

2

Look for catchphrases.

Almost every prof has them. It might be the way they start a sentence i.e. Logically speaking…, Understandably the data…, an empirical…. Some might be a whole sentence. You will notice them in the papers you look at. Use them yourself as this type of flattery is the way to go. It shows you think like them or that they have influenced you on the subject or a subject similar to what the paper is about.

3

Check out the bibliography and footnotes.

See who their heroes or influences were. Once again, look at their catchphrases and use them. More importantly, quote them in support of your assignment. The prof will know their work and get a warm and fuzzy feeling because not only did you go beyond the scope of the assignment, you actually researched their favourite peers. Plus, quotes eat up space.

4

Always eat up white space with content.

That means no triple line spacing, larger margins or a larger font than usual. These things will always be noticed and counted against you.

5

Illustrations/pictures should support the assignment.

If you can find some that pertain to the assignment through the bibliography or footnotes, this is a bonus.

You can use the above information over and over again as you already have the basics.

Now, this is important – always agree with the prof even when you think they are wrong. Black can be white in the classroom, so find a way to justify that. When you have a doctorate you can argue and change the system.

If you really must, you can introduce one new idea as longs as it supports the professor's thinking.

Very importantly, always remember to credit your sources to avoid being accused of plagiarism.

Taapwaauchaayimiisu
Believe In Yourself

OUR PROGRAM

Taapwaauyimiisu (Believe in youself) program is a resource available for the schools in the three Cree communities, where the pilot project is currently being launched . We offer support to the students' ages 12 to 17 years old who, for various reasons, are temporarily suspended from 3 to 5 days from school.

The expression ***"Believe in yourself"*** is dear to our program as we want to send a strong message of empowerment and self-worth to our youth.

OUR SERVICE SITES

Taapwaauchaayimiisu program in Mistissini has officially moved in their new service site at the Family Resource Centre (Old Youth Centre). Thank you, Cree Nation of Mistissini, for your collaboration in providing space for our youth.

We would also like to thank everyone that attended our open houses in Waskaganish and Chisasibi.

Should you require more information, please contact the coordinator.

Tel: ***(819) 527-0407***
E-mail: ***Byourself@cngov.ca***

Alternative Suspension YMCA

Department of Justice and Correctional Services, CNG

Cree School Board

The Niikaan Project

A joint effort between the CSB and Minority Media, the Niikaan Project is a three-year video game concentration program currently being run at Waapihtiiwewan High School in Oujé-Bougoumou. Students learn the ins and outs of video-game production and have the opportunity to focus on the elements of the process that interest them the most – either video production, sound production, graphic design, story writing or a combination of one or more digital media related skills.

The Niikaan Project also introduces its students to the world of Virtual Reality and is designed so that upon graduating high school, students who have participated in the program are capable of creating, producing and sharing their individual and community stories, moving on to further their studies at the CEGEP or university level or immediately pursuing employment in the media industry. As the CSB and Minority Media fine-tune their curriculum in Oujé-Bougoumou, we will hopefully see the course expand to other high schools in the James Bay territory.

Mikw Chiyâm

"Moving forward without hesitation" – the theme of an arts education concentration program launched last year in Mistissini – is a fitting name for a project that spares no expense to immerse Cree youth in the arts and provide outlets for creative self-expression. Recently featured on APTN National News, Mikw Chiyâm is accessible to students in Secondary 1 to 4 and consists of four seven week intensive artist residencies that bring contemporary Indigenous artists together with students to promote cultural identity, increase student retention and train participants in the artistic medium of their choice.

The brainchild of N'we Jinan's David Hodges and CSB's Serge Beliveau and Kim Quinn, the 2016-2017 Mikw Chiyâm program is expanding from Voyageur Memorial School in Mistissini to Wiinibekuu High School in Waskaganish and James Bay Eeyou School in Chisasibi. This year's offerings range from a host of visual arts (painting, drawing, collective mural, multimedia, photography and collage) to music and performance, drama, performance and show production, multimedia writing and zines, and multimedia and film.

Chris Robertson, Jamie Bradbury, Sharon Hunter, Moe Clark, Ahau Marino, Cheyenne Scott, Francine Cunningham, Melanie Garcia, Kalkidan Assefa, Brit Kewin, Nicolas Gouin and Fanny Aishaa are the artists scheduled for residencies throughout the year.
For more info: mikwchiyam.com

Alternative Suspension

The Alternative Suspension program was developed by the Montreal YMCA and has been expanded to over 40 communities throughout Quebec. The initiative sees school suspensions as opportunities for personal development through active youth engagement. The YMCA and the Department of Justice of the Cree Nation Government have partnered to create a culturally literate, Cree version of the Alternative Suspension program that takes into account the history and lived realities of the Cree Nation. During the suspension, a youth worker helps students with their homework, and administers a variety of workshops tailored to each youth. The youth worker also keeps the parents and teachers informed on the participant's daily progress.

Eeyou Istchee invests in Elementary and High School Programs

Back-to-School Support from the Cree Department of Justice

SNAP Program

Stop Now and Plan (SNAP) is a program designed to assist children ages 6-11 who struggle with behavioural issues, and their parents. It is administered at home and in the classroom and is aimed at teaching children foundational skills that will assist them throughout their lives. SNAP sessions focus on things like body cues, dealing with anger, respect, dealing with bullying, and body respect and wellness. The service is available to all elementary-level children across Eeyou Istchee.

Challenge Days

Challenge Days are six-and-a-half-hour events done in schools, with up to 100 students and 25 adult volunteers, centered on sharing and connecting while creating a safe environment. During the event, the youth are encouraged to participate in a number of speaking exercises in front of their peers and adults, knowing that everything that is talked about stays in the room. For the children, it's about seeing they're not alone and being heard in a safe space.

Me to We / We Day

Me to We / We Day is about teaching youth that you do not have to wait to grow up to make a difference in the world. As children and youth, they have the power to make positive change in their own communities and in the world as well. National, provincial and local We Day events take place throughout the year, hosting activists and entertainers and rewarding students for taking action both locally and abroad.

Youth Engagement Funds

Through youth engagement funds, the Cree Justice Department has funded youth canoe brigades, summer camps, workshops, music-and-art festivals, on-the-land cultural programs, and girls' self-esteem programs. Youth engagement works with youth leaders to develop programs and initiatives to help young people in communities succeed in school, develop personally and socially, build leadership and team work skills, challenge themselves, stay in school and talk about issues like bullying and addiction.

Mindfulness Program

The Mindfulness program launches this year and is for youth with learning disabilities. Through breathing and discipline based programs like yoga and martial arts, it is meant to focus a youth's attention so they can succeed in school and improve their inter-personal relationships.

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The following *is adapted from a speech Philip Awashish delivered to the AGA of the Assembly of First Nations July 12 in Niagara Falls*

I am a member of the Cree Nation of Mistissini of Eeyou Istchee. We call ourselves Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee rather than the Cree people of James Bay, Quebec. We cannot say the word "Cree" in our language because there is no "r" in our language. Besides, the spellcheck of the computers keeps suggesting I change the word "Crees" to "Creeps".

I was one of the principal negotiators for the Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee in the negotiations that lead to the signing of our modern-day treaty known as the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

The negotiations that led to the signing of the JBQNA in 1975 were a rare opportunity for the Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee to achieve recognition and protection of rights, guarantees and benefits. These negotiations, and subsequent agreements, also provided a means for achieving our vision of self-government for our people, communities and lands.

In the early 1970s, we were about 6000 Eeyou living in six crude communities without electricity, suitable water and sewage systems, or adequate housing. We hunted and fished and this traditional way of life is still important to us. The non-Aboriginal governments did not recognize our rights to hunt and fish. We lived in an era when we were excluded from all decision-making regarding the governance, administration and management of our lands and natural resources.

In particular, non-Aboriginal governments did not recognize Aboriginal rights. The Constitution of Canada was silent on the issue. Hence, Canada and Quebec did not recognize the right of self-government. These governments held the view that Native people had no rights of government other than that the government chooses to legislate or impose such as the regime under the Indian Act.

The JBQNA arose out of what was initially opposition by Eeyou to proposed hydroelectric development in Eeyou Istchee. The Quebec government and Hydro-Québec, in April 1971, had announced the first major hydroelectric development project without consultations with the Eeyou who would be profoundly impacted by the proposed project. Quebec and Hydro-Québec denied our rights and ignored us. The government of Canada also decided to ignore us by calling their position "alert neutrality."

by Philip Awashish

Moving beyond the Indian Act

So we sued Quebec, Canada and Hydro-Québec. The court cases initiated by Eeyou resulted, by a treaty process, in a negotiated settlement respecting the rights of Eeyou and development of natural resources in Eeyou Istchee. The treaty process was the way chosen to secure recognition and protection of Eeyou rights and to redefine relationships with Canada and Quebec.

In the negotiations leading to our treaty, we were offered certain powers for our local governments in addition to those provided at the time by the Indian Act.

However, the Eeyou leadership rejected the restrictive and supervised regime of local government imposed on the Cree bands by the Indian Act. We rejected the process of amending the Indian Act, which the federal government said would be done for our benefit. We rejected the entire Indian Act because at the time it was a discriminatory piece of legislation and it denied the rights of First Nations. So we decided to kill and bury the Indian Act.

Instead, we negotiated a process for special legislation concerning local government for the Eeyou and their communities. On November 11, 1975, the Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec, Northern Quebec Inuit Association, Government of Canada, Government of Quebec and certain crown corporations such as Hydro-Québec signed the JBQNA.

Consequently, the Government of Canada and the Grand Council

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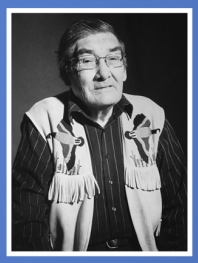

Robbie Matthew, Nishiiyuu Council of Elders

Day One:	***CNYC***
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For further information please contact:

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of the Crees discussed the terms of the special legislation concerning local government for the Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee. This resulted in the Cree-Naskapi Act, which was adopted by Parliament in 1984.

I was one of the principal Eeyou negotiators for the Cree-Naskapi Act with Canada. It took us nine long years to negotiate and to determine suitable funding arrangements for the Cree local governments and administrations.

The Cree-Naskapi Act provides for an orderly and efficient system of Eeyou local government, including the administration, management and control of community lands. The Eeyou are able to go beyond the restrictions inherent in the Indian Act and assume full control in the governance and administration of their communities and their lands.

Consequently, the Cree-Naskapi Act is the first legislation in Canada to provide some recognition of Aboriginal self-government. It redefines the relationship between the Government of Canada and the Cree and Naskapi peoples.

We, the Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee, have freed ourselves from the bonds and chains of the Indian Act since 1984 – a period of 32 years.

In general, the powers and authority of Eeyou governance arise also from long-standing practices based on Eeyou law, traditions and customs. Not only did we get out of the Indian Act. In addition to the recognition and protection of our right of self-government through our local Chiefs and Councils, we have moved to the implementation of the JBQNA and its related agreements in the **following ways:**

- **We exercise control and administration** of Eeyou education through the Cree School Board;
- **The Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay**, under the control of the Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee, is responsible for the provision of health and social services;
- **The Cree Regional Authority has become the Cree Nation Government** through agreements with Canada and Quebec; and,
- **The Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee presently participates in the governance of the entire territory** of Eeyou Istchee with certain municipalities and Quebec.

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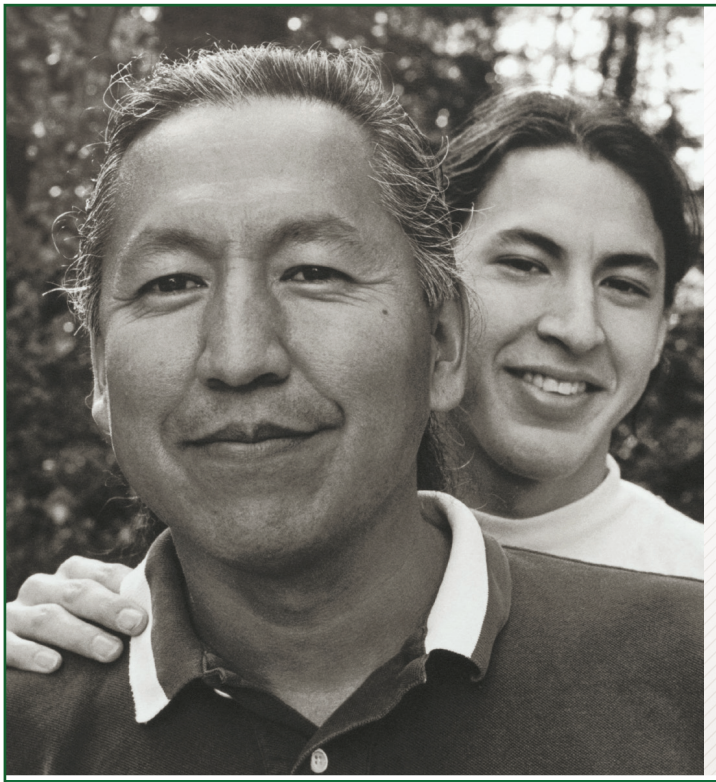

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This allows us to govern our own affairs and territories. Implicit in this principle, is the right of the Eeyou Nation to enter into intergovernmental relations with Canada and Quebec, to acquire the benefits of such agreements, and to acquire the responsibilities and burden of self-governance.

In many instances, the Eeyou adopted a "just do it" approach. We were proactive. In the early 1970s, we formed the Grand Council of the Crees without approval of non-Aboriginal governments and without funds. The Eeyou leaders decided to act together, as one nation and one people and speak with one voice. In deciding this course of action through consensus, Eeyou exercised self-determination as the collective power of choice.

This decision to recognize and acknowledge the importance of collective rights, interests, responsibilities and action led to our empowerment. It is important to empower yourselves because no one else is going to empower you. This action and expression of Eeyou unity, as one nation, to protect our collective rights and interests was also the beginning of the Eeyou Nation Government.

We also had a common understanding that Eeyou governance isn't something that's going to happen in the future. It's something that has happened, is happening and will continue to happen in accordance with Eeyou law, rights and aspirations. And this is the nature of our inherent right to govern ourselves.

In addition, we shared a common vision of nation building. For the Eeyou, nation building is about maintaining and developing culture and identity; supporting self-governing institutions; and sustaining traditional and alternative ways of making a living.

Our treaty-making journey contains the main principles and values of leadership: vision, empowerment, unity, commitment, humility, respect, trust, participation, persistence and integrity. It is a journey based on forming and clarifying one's own dreams and ideas, sharing those ideas, transforming those dreams into actions and engaging the help of others to bring dreams and ideas to reality. It is also a story of the youth of the time working with the Elders and leaders and some as leaders to pursue the nation's vision and goals. This particular journey is about empowerment of the people, nation building and the quest for social justice.

I was a youth at the time. When I tell the James Bay story, I am sometimes asked, "Where are the youth in your story." I answer, "We were the youth!"

Eeyou governance is also the practice and exercise of stewardship, guardianship and custodianship of Eeyou Istchee. The journey for full Eeyou governance begins and ends with the historical and traditional authorities of self-governing power – the people of the land.

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THE NEW SCHOOL SHIRT

by Dan Isaac

September is an exciting time for most kids and their parents. For children, it's back to school to show off their new clothes and reconnect with friends. For parents, it's back to structure: bed times, school busses and bagged lunches.

For the Indigenous community of Canada, however, the back-to-school season can evoke different feelings. "I heard an Elder say that September is crying month," said Phyllis Webstad.

Webstad remembers the excitement she had before her first day of school. Her grandmother scraped together what money she could and bought her a bright, shiny new orange shirt from the general store. She was very proud of that shirt, a pride that disappeared the moment she arrived at residential school.

"When I got to St. Joseph's Mission Residential School, they stripped me, took away my clothes. I never saw my orange shirt again," said Webstad, choking back tears. "All of us little children were crying and no one cared."

Today, Webstad works as one of the leads on the Orange Shirt Day, a movement working towards national recognition aimed at building awareness within the education system around the dark legacy of residential schools. The idea behind the movement is simple and can be enacted by anyone anywhere. All it involves is donning an orange shirt on September 30, in recognition of the harm the residential school system did to Indigenous children's sense of self-esteem and well-be-

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Phyllis Webstad sharing her story at an Orange Shirt Day event in her community

ing, and affirming a commitment to ensure that from now on, every child matters.

And while the idea for Orange Shirt Day came from Webstad's story, it's a relatable experience. "For every residential school survivor and their families, something was taken away, it's their story too," said Webstad.

Webstad is Shuswap and hails from Williams Lake, BC. She first shared her story three years ago at a Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) event in her community. During the event, the chairperson of the TRC, Chief Justice Murray Sinclair, issued a challenge to all involved to continue with what they started.

"A remarkable thing happened there, all levels of our community were involved in that first reconciliation event, though I'm not even sure we called it reconciliation back then," said Joan Sorley, a local politician and a co-founder of Orange Shirt Day.

For Sorley, the day is about coming to terms with the dark aspects of Canada's history and reconciling it for future generations. "As non-First Nations people are becoming aware of the history of residential schools, more and more they're trying to do better. It will take generations to undo all the damage," said Sorley. "But I believe it can and will be undone."

> "**One by one**, they came up, hugged me and said that I needed to keep going for them."

Since that challenge, Orange Shirt Day has continued on with an "if you build it, they will come" mentality. Six volunteers run the organization, three of whom are committed to the national and international levels. Webstad herself spends about 3-4 hours a night working on Orange Shirt Day's web presence in addition to logging a 40-hour work week. That combined with emotional labour of sharing her story takes its toll.

"By the end of October I'm drained," said Webstad. "Sometimes I need to remind myself that I'm taking this negative experience and turning it into something positive. There's good that will come out of this."

In 2014, following the second Orange Shirt Day, Webstad was asked to speak to a group from the Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSS). "I went to those Elders and told them, I don't know if I can keep doing this," Webstad recalled. "All the Elders put me in the middle of the gym and drummed around me. One by one, they came up, hugged me and said that I needed to keep going for them."

These encounters are what drives her to continue, Webstad admitted. "Survivors often come to me at my day job and say 'thank you for talking about your experience' because they'll never be able to share theirs."

Even with the gratitude she receives from fellow survivors, Webstad isn't sure she'll ever be fully healed from the trauma. "I commend those who can be healed. I'd like to have a conversation with someone who thinks they've healed because I really want to hear about it," she said.

KEEPING SPACE

Montreal Native arts hub **bridges a cultural divide**

by Dan Isaac

Photos provided by Ashukan Cultural Space

The traditional meets the contemporary in the art that hangs from the exposed stone walls of the Ashukan Cultural Space in Old Montreal. Powwow music welcomes the patrons as they ascend the spiral staircases of the three-story showroom.

Outside, an ocean of people flows through Place Jacques-Cartier as locals and tourists watch from restaurant patios. It's a striking space and location that sometimes eludes the people working to keep the doors open.

"It's so hectic and we're so busy that sometimes we forget how beautiful it is here," said Mèlina Tsigounis, Ashukan's communications officer.

The Ashukan Cultural Space is an Indigenous art hub committed to making Indigenous art and artists from across Canada accessible to the mainstream. The Algonquin word "Ashukan" means, suitably, "building bridges." But for the Mi'kmaq-Acadian (or Métis) director of the space, Nadine St-Louis, it's modern infrastructure that embraces ancestral teachings.

"If Bombardier makes a plane but there's no runways, they're pretty useless," said St-Louis. "Our artists need a space that embraces our worldview."

The underlying framework of the organization is social entrepreneurship. It's a business model based on economic and professional development, social inclusion, cultural reconciliation, and respecting and promoting the artists.

When selling a piece through a third party, an artist typically can expect a 70/30 split in favour of the gallery. At Ashukan that split is flipped in favour of the artist. That practice will continue because "Indigenous artist are the gatekeepers of the past and the bridge builders of the future," St-Louis insisted. "The artists are the key to reconciliation."

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Alternative Suspension

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But as a primarily social enterprise, it can be difficult to keep up with rent that exceeds $100,000 per year. "What brings happiness is not fame or money but a life of service and finding purpose," explained St-Louis. "I've dedicated my life to this, this is my mission."

So while the space is devoted to Indigenous arts and culture, the staff's day-to-day activities are grounded in administration. They're in a constant state of grant writing, locating funding, trying to hit deadlines, endless paper work, and finding artists based in rural Indigenous communities. "The mission is to create opportunity for artists. The results for the artist is our reward," said Tsigounis.

Additionally, the Ashukan Cultural Space functions as a mediator and facilitator for the artist's journey through the art-world's mechanisms. They host professional and personal development opportunities so that Indigenous artists can learn the bureaucratic language that's integral to success in the arts.

"We support the artist throughout the process of applying for grants through the Canada Arts Council," said Tsigounis. "It's a machine everyone, no matter their background, has to go through if they want to be an artist."

For instance, she added, "You have to be tri-lingual. You have to speak the language that resonates with the Indigenous community, the investors and the government, and they're all different."

At times, walking in three worlds can be conflicting. "We're removing the colonial lens, and putting on the cultural lens to share the diversity of our worldview," noted St-Louis. "But we're in a bit of a paradox because while we're de-colonizing, we're still dependent on the institutions and their frameworks and boxes."

Part of decolonizing means breaking stereotypes. Unfortunately stereotypes sell. "The First Nations artists doing contemporary work struggle, or have to move away from their Indigenous identity in order to fit in. We don't want that."

But again it's a constant mediation between being culturally literate yet inclusive. "We also have to realize that we distil First Nation culture to a general public who may not have the first clue about Indigenous people," said Tsigounis.

St-Louis believes we're bearing witness to an "Indigenous Renaissance," one of the human spirit. "We've arrived at a time where people are fed up with disposable culture. The past 500 years of humanity has destroyed the air, the water, the earth and the human spirit," said St-Louis. "We have a responsibility to the earth. It's in our teachings, our stories, and the stories are kept in the art."

Background: Skeleton Witch after performing; Photo by Pat Beaudry

A LIGHTER SIDE OF

Downsizing – it happens everywhere, even to music festivals. That was certainly the case with the 2016 edition of Heavy Montreal, the metal and hard rock festival in the Parc Jean-Drapeau.

Cut back to two days, a stripped-down HM chose to refocus almost solely on metal acts in a more intimate site August 6 and 7 – instead of the Friday-Sunday format it used in the past. Down also was attendance, roughly 35,000 this year from the 75,000 two years ago when Metallica and Slayer headlined the festival.

Headliners this year included Disturbed and Five Finger Death Punch. Solid acts, to be sure, but they lacked the, uh, punch of past shows. Gone were the punk groups from last year, such as NOFX, that provided some rousing diversity to the bone-crunching rage.

Herewith are a few metal-minded thoughts – not always friendly – on a few of this year's HM acts.

Top left to right: Killswitch Engage, Crowd pumped up for Five Finger Death Punch, A few Crees enjoying the weekend, Five Finger Death Punch performing; Photos by: Tim Snow

HEAVY

by Lyle Stewart

Hydlo and FRIENDS Online

Checking Developed Spawning Ground Use in the Rupert Diversion Bays

E nitûchischeyihtâkanûhkwâuh kâ ushihtâkanûhkwâuh âmîhkânânh e iyâpatihkwâuh aniteh wâskâhîkanishîu pishcheyâshikû wâshihâuh

To watch the new video, visit **www.hydloandfriends.com**

In the area of the Rupert diversion bays, five multispecies spawning grounds were developed downstream of the instream flow release structures. To check the physical integrity and use of these spawning grounds, fish eggs and larvae are harvested from the river and taken to the laboratory for sorting and counting.

Jeremy Mattawashish, Field worker, Mistissini

Harry Blacksmith, Lab technician, Mistissini

Lifting of the drift nets

Georges Neeposh, Tallyman, trapline M25, Mistissini

Each month, a new video will be added to hydloandfriends.com. *To learn more, listen to the Hydlo and Friends radio show on JBCCS. Its hosts, Luke MacLeod and Luc Duquette, discuss the environmental follow-up activities related to the Eastmain-Sarcelle-Rupert complex, as well as the concerns of land users with regard to Hydro-Québec's facilities and activities.*

Next show:
Wednesday, September 14,
at 8:00 a.m.

Photos by Tim Snow

FIVE FINGER DEATH PUNCH

Five Finger Death Punch – named for an apocryphal martial arts blow made famous in movies such as Kill Bill – feature a signature double bass drum kick to the abdomen that thuds through most of their repertoire. Meaty riffs, catchy hooks and an onslaught of furiousity have made FFDP a festival favourite south of the border.

Singer Ivan Moody's handgun microphone stand furthers the macho image. The irony is that his lyrics belie the bone-crunching tunes. As with their opening song, "Lift Me Up," the most common words in his lyrics are "I" and "me" and "my". Usually combined with a complaint of someone doing him wrong.

It's thin-skinned stuff, and in this set, only broken by a cover of Bad Company's self-named 1970s hit. The quintet closed with "The Bleeding," after a blistering version of their 2011 breakout hit, "Under and Over It." "The Bleeding" may be what passes as a FFDP ballad… and an oddly downbeat choice to a set that many judged as lacklustre.

KILLSWITCH ENGAGE

This whip-fast metalcore group from Massachusetts lit up a furious set with a cover of the late Ronnie James Dio's "Holy Diver."

DISTURBED

Disturbed's pyromaniac stage show raised the temperature on the Molson Canadian stage as singer David Draiman took his place at his customary pulpit to deliver his dark and moody sermons.

Saturday's headliners, the Chicago quintet were the closest to superstar power at this year's event. They were also the only band with crossover appeal, reaching beyond the hardcore metal fan.

Disturbed even delivered a melodic cover of Simon and Garfunkel's "The Sounds of Silence," only with an overlay of gothic menace. That was preceded by an almost note-for-note cover of Phil Collins' "Land of Confusion," which must have left the 20,000 or so fans in attendance more than a little confused.

VOLBEAT

Volbeat are Denmark's metal exports, though many would quibble with the metal label. These rockers are into Americana roots, from blues, country and folk – all influences can be turned into a hard-driving metal song with soulful undertones.

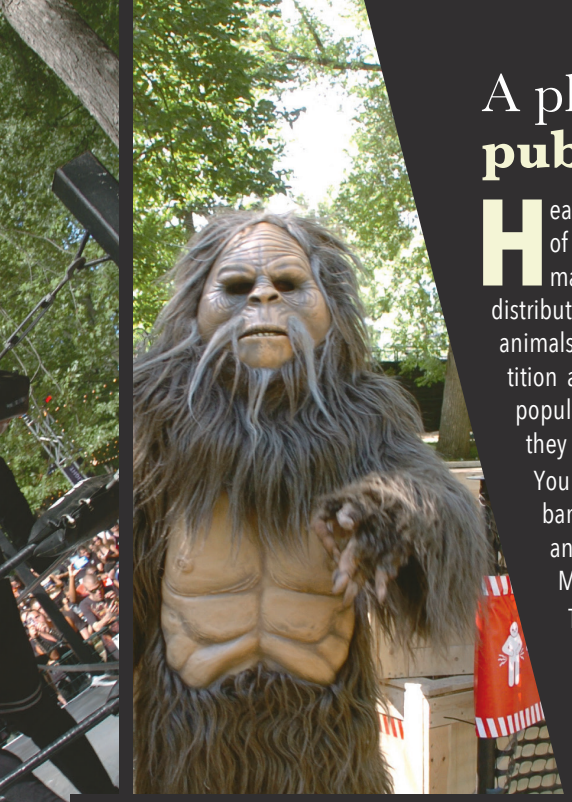
Michael Poulsen on guitar and vocals, possibly the only man at the festival without ass-length hair or a shaved head, has a rich voice with a wide range – and you can actually understand his lyrics! From the opener – the current radio hit "The Devil's Bleeding Crown" – the Copenhagen foursome delivered a solid rock set.

For the last song, "Still Counting," Poulsen invited the singer from Napalm Death to perform with him. Which may be funny, since the signature lyric in the piece goes, "Counting all the assholes in the room… Well I'm definitely not alone!" Good stuff.

USA OUT OF VIETNAM

The only Montreal representative this year was this experimental group led by former Bionic frontman Johnson Cummins. Their set was heavy on mood, aural intensity and depth. Which explains songs that may have a beginning but work hard and long to find their end.

Left top & bottom, Photos by: Tim Snow



BREAD AND CIRCUSES

by Will Nicholls

A phrase used to describe the generation of **public approval through diversion**

Heavy Mania is Heavy Montreal's version of bread and circuses. The Romans, who made this a fine art, employed food distribution, public baths, gladiators, exotic animals, chariot races, and sports competition as a political strategy to distract the population. Looking at Heavy Montreal, they have adopted part of that formula.

You had the theatrics of the heavy metal bands, some free food, lots of drink and, of course, the gladiators of Heavy Mania.

Talking to Montreal-born wrestler Shayne Hawke, one of the Heavy Mania organizers, he revealed to *the Nation* the secret of jumping off a 15-foot ladder onto another wrestler.

"Dude, I'm bleeding right now. You want the secret to jumping off a 15-foot ladder? You jump off a 15-foot ladder. That's it. Nobody ever watches a stuntman and says they're so fake. What we do is so physically taxing and demanding. We don't have an off-season and it's extremely dangerous. One slip-up and you're paralyzed for life," said Hawke.

"I personally believe calling wrestling fake and denouncing it as such is the equivalent in 2016 of reading a headline in a Facebook article and then having an opinion in the comment section. As in, you did not do your research. You did not bother to read the article. You are just saying this is stupid. Suicide Squad was great, but it was so fake. I saw some of those actors walking around after they were supposed to be dead."

Hawke is passionate and so are the wrestlers with him. Many had scrapes and cuts, but were game for more. Like Stephanie, who's been a wrestler for 10 years. She took a few years off to have children and returned to the ring a year and a half ago. Stephanie loved the scene at Heavy Mania.

"It's awesome," she said. "Everyone is great and it was fun. It's a nice sunny day… perfect."

Stephanie lost her matches this time around, however. "It's okay, it's part of the job. Next year I will win for sure," she said.

Hawke added they attracted a larger crowd than last year.

"We had a great location this year. If you went to the bathroom, you saw Heavy Mania and that was awesome. If I'm going to take a leak and I saw a bunch of guys leaping off the top ropes, I'm going to check that out. We had someone jump off our entranceway onto a guy on a table. In one match we used 3,000 thumbtacks. One of the guys had a thumbtack in his forehead. One guy had a tack on his ass and didn't know it. When he sat down it was really funny in a morbid way. It was funny to me. Wrestling and sadomasochism go hand-in-hand," laughed Hawke.

What did Hawke consider the best thing about this year's show? "At one point in the show it started raining and the crowd didn't disperse. They were so interested in what was happening in the ring they said we're going to get soaked but we're cool with that. I thought that was pretty rad because the rain was cold and two they're sticking around even though there's cover about 10 feet away but they want to stay close to the action and they got poured on," he said.

Co-organizer Spencer Adams said that was the worst part for him. "I hated it because I was running around like a chicken with its head cut off making sure people weren't getting electrocuted and the equipment wasn't getting fried," said Adams.

Another part of the performance was the new wrestlers. Hawke and Adams run the IWS Training Centre wrestling school on Montreal's West Island. "Some of the dudes were having their first match ever this weekend. Some had three months experience, some had six, but my goal is to get them out and working as soon as possible. Imagine the thrill of having your first match here with the crowd at Heavy MTL," said Hawke.

Admitted newbie Jonathan Duberry: "I was pretty nervous in the beginning but once you get out there you feel the crowd and you go with the flow. I learned to wrestle at the IWS Training Centre. Shayne Hawke is a great teacher. He gets your ring confidence up in no time. It doesn't take long before you're performing in front of people. I was a little nervous here because there is a difference in performing for 100 people versus over 300 people. It's a little nerve-wracking, but I went out there and tore the roof off."

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Tech

The world of computers is ever expanding at an incredible rate. With virtually everyone connecting through technology, it's in everybody's best interest to know how to better protect themselves from cybercriminals who have a malicious agenda – like stealing your information, or worse; cooking your computer.

A solid start to being protected is to be educated and informed. I'm going to talk a little about being a proactive end user and give you some tips for protecting yourself, your data and your computer.

There are a number of ways that you could find yourself in a sticky situation while using your internet connected computer. I'm sure you know someone or have heard stories about people falling victim to a computer virus that turned their world upside down, but with a little know how, many of these incidents can be avoided.

1 Create a **Backup**

I would suggest that before anything else, especially if you use your computer a lot for work and have any important files that you do not want to lose: Create a Backup. Preferably on an external hard drive or on a cloud platform. This way if you do fall victim to nasty computer virus, your files are safe.

Get a dependable Anti-Virus **Program** 2

There are some free versions of Anti-virus software out there but depending on how much you value your information and PC, purchasing a subscription would be a very smart investment. Some of the top rated Anti-Virus programs on the market right now are Bitdefender, Kaspersky and Norton. Each have different features but all have the same M.O - to protect your PC

Protecting yourself **online**

by Thomas Barone

Be **Cautious** 3

Be cautious of the way you communicate with websites and people on the Internet (instant messaging or chatrooms) This seems like common sense but I feel as though I have to say it anyways, i.e. be very cautious when filling out personal information and If you plan to order from an online store, be sure that the Web site uses secure technology. When you are at the checkout screen, verify that the Web address begins with https. Also, check to see if a tiny locked padlock symbol appears at the bottom right of the checkout screen, or that there is a statement on the checkout screen stating that the pages are secure with a security technology vendor. Check that the security technology does exist by checking the security technology company's web site.

Watch out for **phishing scams** 4

Watch out for phishing scams. Phishing scams use fraudulent emails and fake websites, masquerading as legitimate businesses, to lure unsuspecting users into revealing private account or login information. To be safe, if you receive an email from a business that includes a link to a web site, make certain that the web site you visit is legitimate. Instead of clicking through to the site from within the email, open a separate Web browser and visit the business' web site directly to perform the necessary actions. You can also verify that an email is in fact from a legitimate business by calling the business or agency directly.

Beware of **suspicious programs** 5

Be cautious of programs you install on your computer. This is primarily how people get viruses on their computer. Often malicious software is disguised as an attachment to an e-mail often sent by a fake e-mail account (from a long lost relative, a far away friend etc.), the unsuspecting victim opens the attachment and then it's too late. If you have a solid Anti-Virus program installed on your PC, it SHOULD pick up the suspicious programs and viruses but it's never a 100% guarantee. I highly recommend downloading a program called Malwarebytes – it's free and very effective in removing potentially harmful software from your computer. The only tricky part about it is to remember to do a scan every once in awhile, especially if you do a lot of downloading from the internet.

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Rite of passage

by Sonny Orr

I'm adjusting my tie and checking for any missed beard stubble. A quick shower and shave gets me ready in about 15 minutes. It's just a matter of finding some good socks to go with my George dress shoes and lining them up with a great jacket. Taking a cue from a predetermined colour code, I choose the blue tie. Complete – I look like a boss. I check on the others to see if they are ready: nope, still an hour to go apparently. Hmmm, this is what happened when we went to pick out the gown.

Yes, it's a special day when I dress to the nines. My daughter is ready to leave high school and is graduating today. We had been busy getting ready for this, shopping at the elegant clothing store in downtown Val-d'Or.

I had in tow one mother and two aunts and I figured that my taste for clothing was infinitely off for this type of shopping, so I snuck off across the street for a double short espresso and a Nanaimo bar. It turned out that shopping for fancy food was about the same as shopping for fancy clothing, as some very picky eaters were slowing down the very short line-up at the counter. Finally, after a gut-twisting 10 minutes, I got my caffeine fix and the best alternative to a Snickers. I consumed the two rather inelegantly, and then headed back to the store.

Astonishingly, there was a tie between three dresses and some negotiation remained on the colour coordination. So I relaxed and marvelled at the female shopping machines. It was amazing, watching another couple of ladies choose a scarf after trying several dresses. My little group worked the saleslady into a discount fever, thankfully for my pocketbook.

I had no idea that shopping could be like this, until I had a flashback of a similar store in Montreal. It was a three-story shop and every floor had oodles and oodles of endless fashion-related items. I wondered when I could spring into action and carry the shopping bags out of the store. Wandering around, I lost everyone but managed to find my way back outside. Hanging around the entrance were other men, looking anxious and muttering a lot. One looked like he was ready to have a sunstroke, but I quickly realized that he was listening to some hard rock music and was on another planet. At least he had some sense.

Back in the store, I finally whipped out my debit card and bought what seemed to be the lightest shopping session ever. Even the discount was pleasant. After further chitchat with the saleslady, it turned out that we knew each other – she had been my late father's neighbour. Then I felt that the hefty discount had more effect and we left the store. On the flight back home, I wondered if our luggage would make it, as Great Whale is notorious for bad weather and full aircrafts, but no, everything arrived intact.

Already a half-hour late, my pacing begins to bug everyone so we leave for the school where the ceremony is to take place. Another 45 minutes spin by and we're finally ready to walk out and present this year's crop of young adults. My pride nearly bursts my already tight shirt as my daughter receives her diploma and a few awards to boot. I make a small observation that the dress is covered by her graduation gown and the thought of the prom made me wonder a bit. Oh well, it's a rite of passage for every graduate, leaving the sound of dad yelling "Wake up!" every morning with the quarter hour countdown until school, stuff like that.

As for the prom, I heard that the private bonfire was a little more exciting. I know because other parents did their own detective work and discovered more details. Soon they will turn into little money-makers and my pocketbook will be a little less stressed.

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UTNS

First Nation struggles **win recognition**

by Xavier Kataquapit

It has been a hot and humid summer in northern Ontario. However, the political climate for First Nation people in this province and right across Canada has been refreshing. Good things are beginning to happen for First Nations in education, housing and economic development. All this has been possible mostly because of the federal government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Although I was very sad to tune in to the final Tragically Hip concert in Kingston on CBC, it was also a chance to witness cultural history being made and to pay homage to an incredible Canadian band and of course the creative genius Gord Downie. During the concert Downie put Trudeau under the spotlight and urged him to keep moving ahead with making lives better for the people in the north. Of course, we all knew that he meant the First Nation people of Canada and in particular, my home community of Attawapiskat and other locations on the great James Bay.

I was so proud of those moments when Trudeau and Downie were connecting and in a way making an informal pact to make a difference for First Nations people. Downie and the band were one of the few major music acts to ever travel north and play for First Nation people while they were in their prime and could have performed on any stage in the world. The Tragically Hip really voiced their concerns and love for First Nation people over the years and they are a favourite band of Native people right across Canada. To realize that Downie used his precious few moments at his final concert ever to lobby for my people made my heart swell with pride and hope for the future.

The Tragically Hip really are about what it means to be Canadian. The band is caring, kind, responsible and not afraid to take a stand. That is who we are as Canadians when we are at our best.

As Canadians we care about the weak, the elderly, the children, minorities, the sick and the down and out. We have developed a society with a lot of programs that make sure we are caring for each other. As a First Nation person I can tell you our struggle has been long and difficult and we have had to endure a lot of pain and grief but things are looking up thanks to quality people like Gord Downie and Justin Trudeau.

Gord and all of our First Nation leaders and the public are right to keep some pressure on Trudeau and the Liberal government. After all, nobody gets elected as prime minister who is not rubber stamped by the very powerful one percent, and that small and influential group has a lot of say in what happens in terms of government policy. For proof of that, we just have to look at the first black man to ever be president of the United States. That government has carried on the same wars and most of the same policies that the dreaded Bush government ran for years. So our voices must be heard by Trudeau to make sure he has the will of the people behind him so that he can make lives better, more peaceful and more fair for all of us.

With that in mind I want to note how proud I am of our very own Chief Marcia Brown Martel of Beaverhouse First Nation. This feisty and articulate woman has been fighting for years to make the Canadian public aware of the Sixties Scoop. The Sixties Scoop, which started in the 1960s and ran into the 1980s, was all about government policy that allowed Ontario child welfare services to place thousands of First Nation children with non-Native families over a period of some 20 years. That policy stole children from their families and robbed them of being brought up in traditional and cultural settings. The experience for so many people was disastrous.

Chief Brown Martel has been fighting to hold the government responsible through a class-action lawsuit. Chief Brown Martel, the representative in the law case for Ontario, was in Toronto recently as part of a large group demonstrating outside the courthouse where a hearing on the case was being held. Hopefully, with the new more respectful and fair approach our provincial and federal governments are developing with my people Chief Brown Martel will find success after her years of dedication to this cause. It is good to see some light at the end of the tunnel.

hôtel Espresso

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Conseil Cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James

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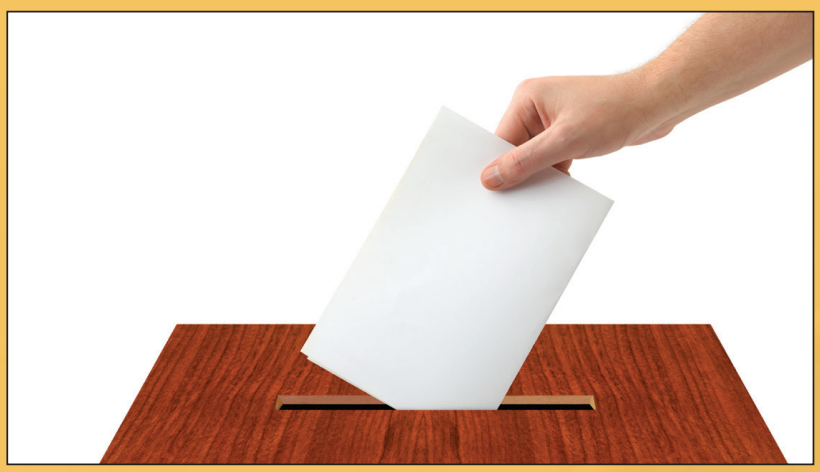
Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

YOUR COMMUNITY,

YOUR ✓VOTE



The Cree Health Board will be holding elections for the CHB Chairperson on **September 6th 2016.**

Nominations will be open between August 7th to 22nd

For more information, please contact

Kenny Loon : *Chief Returning Officer*

Email: **kennl@rogers.com**

Phone: **(613) 314-0553**

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